



NATIONAL LANDING

PENTAGON CITY

CRYSTAL CITY

POTOMAC YARD

September 28, 2021

Mr. Dan Reinhard, P.E.
Virginia Department of Transportation
4975 Alliance Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Mr. Reinhard,

On behalf of the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) and the collective business communities of Crystal City, Pentagon City, and Potomac Yard, I am writing in support of the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) recommendation to convert Route 1 from an elevated highway into a safe, multimodal, urban boulevard included in their **Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study Phase 1 Draft Report**. Below you will find priority recommendations for how the proposal can go further to ensure a reimagined urban boulevard for all who work, live and visit National Landing:

- **Urbanize Route 1-** Removing auto-centric barriers of an elevated highway, prioritizes human-scaled movements and offers easier and safer accessibility for those walking, biking, and taking transit. Equally important is the specific design of the adjoining sidewalks as well as the associated land uses along the corridor. Decisions about landscape and inclusion of biophilic principles, sidewalk treatments, and locations of building entrances should all be considered to ensure a vibrant Route 1.
- **Extend Project Scope-** Extending the project's scope all the way to the Alexandria border offers a more comprehensive, corridor-wide approach to improving Route 1 and would include the intersections at 20th and 23rd Street South. Specifically, the intersections at 20th and 23rd Street South are most in need of a treatment commensurate with the future 18th and 15th Street intersections.
- **Apply Vision Zero Principles-** A people first design for an urbanized Route 1 should slow traffic and deliver a safe, pedestrian-friendly experience and crossings consistent with a Vision Zero approach. Downtowns across the country, including those in the District of Columbia and Montgomery County, have incorporated design standards aimed at safety such as narrower 10-foot travel lanes and maximum speeds of 25 miles per hour. While VDOT's recommended approach to further study lowering the speed limit to 25 miles per hour is commendable, the Coalition recommends adopting other context-sensitive standards that reflect the environment and character of the community through which the roadway travels.
- **Take a People Before Cars Approach-** For Route 1 to truly be a multimodal transportation asset, protected bicycle and micromobility infrastructure must be incorporated along, and especially across the roadway. This can be achieved through the incorporation of a curb separated north/south facility combined with best-in-class physically protected intersections where east/west bicycle network connections can be made. These east/west connections are most critical at 18th and 15th Street South but could also be incorporated at 23rd Street South to maximize safety and connectivity. The Coalition supports additional analysis of the 23rd Street intersection as crucial connection offering dedicated safe space for people to bike and ride micromobility vehicles.
- **Secure VDOT and Arlington County support for creative operations and enforcement tactics -** VDOT and Arlington County must work together to incorporate creative operational approaches to improving safety along the corridor. Automated traffic enforcement would improve adherence to speed limits and other traffic rules while providing revenue that could be reinvested in safety infrastructure improvements throughout the community. On-street parking should be incorporated to further reduce speeds and provide additional protection for the sidewalk and bicycle facility while furthering other economic development goals by supporting the area's restaurant and small-business community. Safety-focused operational improvements like right-on-red restrictions, tight curb radii to slow turning vehicles, and leading pedestrian intervals and bike signals should be used to further prioritize walking, biking and transit.

NATIONAL LANDING
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- **Manage Demand** – To ensure a safe and functional street, the Coalition highlights the need for a comprehensive program to educate and encourage the use of flexible telework, transit, and the rest of National Landing’s rich mobility options.

National Landing is undergoing a dramatic transformation and we support VDOT’s recommended approach to urbanizing Route 1. Reimagining Route 1 is an important step towards realizing that transformation and would be further enhanced by the improvements suggested above. We look forward to continuing to engage on this project in the interest of delivering the safest and most accessible Route 1 for National Landing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy Gabriel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tracy Sayegh Gabriel
President & Executive Director